"A BUTTERFLY ON THE WHEEL"

A Story for the Married and Those Who Expect to Be, Written from the Great Play of the Same Title. :: :: ::

CHAPTER III-Continued.

ed, mechanically. Then, turning, he walked slowly to the sofa and sank onto it, and buried his face in his her head and looked at him. 'His breath came and went with a sharp hissing sound and his shoulders heaved as the waves of passion shook him like storm waves racking a stranded ship. Her lips trembled, and suddenly her whole heart went out to him in a rush of tenderness and sympathy. In an instant she was on her knees beside him.

"Please, Colling, don't do that!" she
"But he has all the luck!" Colling." In a few moments she raised

she was on her knees beside him.

"Please, Colling, don't do that!" she pleaded, tearfully. "I can't bear that you should think me unkind! I like you too well to let you do anything that would—spoil our happiness. I'm not unkind. Really, I'm not! Haven't I shown how fond I am of you? And response to the special properties of the special properties. The shown how fond I am of you? And response to the special properties of the special properties. The special properties of the special

anxiously.

"We have passed the mere friendship line," he said, in a hard voice. "You know that! You would not have left London with me had we been merely friends. Were we merely friends when we sat up night after night at Ellerdine's place? No friends speak to one another as we have spoken? Why!" His teeth closed as his passion swept again. "You've only to touch my hand again and again of my love! Peggy's lips trembled and raised her arms as if to shie again. "You've only to touch my hand to know that I burn with longing!"

"Colling, you must not say such things!" she begged. She was thoroughly frightened. She had hunted the wolf and roused the lion.
"Friends!" He flung the word back at her again. "It's not true! Look at the risks we have taken! Do friends run the risks we have run? Why, we haven't even tried to fool the world! So, for heaven's sake, don't let's try to fool ourselves!"

Peggy gasped. "People don't think we are"

"People don't think!" he laughed bitterly. "My darling, people are only too
glad to think. You know what is said
about others"—

"Oh!" she gasped. He turned to her

quickly, his tone and manner softened "Peggy; you don't care, do you?"
"Don't care!" her fingers gripped the edge of the table and she strove to speak calmiy. "Colling, tell me, do people think we are lovers?"
"How can they help thinking it?" he

demanded. Haven't we given them ev-

ery reason?"

Peggy choked back a scream of horror. "No, no, no!" she gasped, "Oh,
I hate to think of that! We have only
been friends—very kind friends." she
went on feverishly, as if it were necessary only to convince him. "Why should
they think otherwise? Oh, I suppose
it's all my fault—all my fault! I don't
think ungenerous things of others. I
only wanted a companion—a good

only wanted a companion-a good friend!" She sank sobbing into a chair and herself against the table in a piti-ttle heap. Collingwood came and stood over her, but there was no tenderness or sympathy in the gaze that rested on her bowed head. The love of his life had been played with for the amusement of a butterfly, and the bitterness of it welled up to his lips. You wanted some one to pet youpamper you," he said in low, hard nes, "Some one to satisfy all your little vanities-your yearnings for de votion, adulation. I know. You wanted all the joys and none of the risks! There are many women like you. They drive men mad—make drunkards, gamblers, swindlers of them! But I'll not let you drive me mad!" and his teeth clicked. "Peggy. I mean you to be "Peggy, I mean you to be There will be a crash soon. Adamston will take notice of what peo-

ple are saying about us. He will come out of his political shell and end it once and for all!" once and for all!"
"Oh! what have I done!" moaned the girl.
"Done!" echoed Collingwood, with a "What have swift change of tactics. "What have you done to deserve his neglect? Why, he doesn't even know you exist! Why his heart beats by act of Parliament

He'd rather rant at a village meeting than pass an hour with you! Are you going to spend your youth in the com pany of ——
"Stop! Stop!" Peggy broke in, rising, white-faced and imperious. "Say what you like about me—scold me if

you like, but don't say one word against him. You don't know my husband. He "In a stride he was beside her, gaz-ing earnestly into her face.

"But Peggy," he said, "you won't say

"Love him! Oh, I don't know!" she said pathetically, and turned away from him. "I've no chance to love anybody the way you regard love. It was my father who wished me to marry Adam-ston, even before I left school. So

"You mean you do not love Adam-ston and you won't love only one else?" he interrogated.

you see I've had no chance to love any

he interrogated.

"I don't know," she repeated in a weary little voice. "But I certainly don't love any one else. You think I'm neglected—that is absurd. She drew herself up. "George knew I did not love him—he trusts me fully. There will be no crash!"

"There will be;! You take my word for it," he insisted, earnestly. "No man not even Adamston—can stand ridi-cule for long. Remember, Peggy, I mean to win! I shall marry no one

mean to will.

if I don't marry you."

Peggy laughed, clearly and naturally,
with one of and moved over to him with one of

ose sudden shifts of mood that were emost maddening of her charms. "Colling, don't be silly!" she chided, ently. "You are one of the best atches in England. You will marry me beautiful girl who will lead socious and make you a proud, ambitious

money ought to rise to any position."
"You're mad about position!" he exclaimed bitterly.

said Peggy. She had recovered her confidence. The bug had ceased to bite and sting. It would be interesting to

we have been such friends!"

"Friends!" he groaned, bitterly.

"But, Collinga dear, what else can we be?"

He drew away from her sharply and stood up. She rose and gazed at him arrivors!

"Then you have deceived me." he "Then you have deceived

"Colling! I never meant"—
"Never meant! Good heavens!" Collingwood blazed out. "I told you six months ago that I loved you! And ever since then you have let me go everywhere with you and I've told you again and again of my love!"

Peggy's lips trembled and she half raised her arms as if to shield herself from the outburst.

from the outburst.

"You have always been so good to nathetically. "You've Collingwood fairly sprang toward

cried.
"Mean! I mean that you've led me to believe that you didn't care what we did—what people said about us! Mean! That we are alone together, Peggy, you and I!" His voice was low and tense and the words tumbled out over each other in a passionate whirl. That the

go!!" she panted and wrenched herself loose. Then she sank limply onto the the sofa. She felt strangely weak. It the sofa. She felt strangely weak. It was as if she was being robbed of the power of resistance—as if the sheer strength of the passion were overcoming her. In an instant he was beside her and had her in his arms again.

"No, I can't let you go," he whispered between his clenched teeth as he strained her to him. "It is my hour! It's

One arm turned her scarce resisting

with a growl of anger he rose and hur-

the mouthpiece to his shirt bosom.
"Ad—Admanston!" he whispered.
And for once in his life Collingwood

her feet. "Yes!—Yes, we took the wrong train." Collingwood was saying into the

picked up the phone again. "Where is he. London?" whispered Peggy.
"I didn't think to ask.—Hullo! Ellerdine has just gone out," he went on into the phone. "Hullo! Where are ou speaking from?—Damn! We're out off! Hullo! Dites done, madamoi selle, ne coupez pas mon numero, je

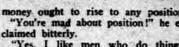
Peggy faced him, livid with Oh, this is fearful! she moaned. he know we were here?"

"Followed!" he muttered, and paused agfin. "Peggy! Rumor—he has been ridiculed into action. Peggy, the crash has come!" he declared solemnly.

But Peggy was beyond coherent thought or speech. She leaned against the mantel, her eyes closed, her breath coming in quick gasps—stricken even beyond tears.

"Go! Go!" she begged. "I shan't—speak another word—to you to-night."

Collingwood fairly ran to her. "No. No! I can't leave you now!" he exclaimed passionately. "Peggy, I worship you!"



me," she said pathetically. never been unkind before."

her.
"Good! Unkind! Why, most men
would have divorced their wives on
far less than half the evidence we have furnished! And you have accepted that position without a murmur! You don't know what you've done!'

and the words tumbled out over each other in a passionate whirl. That the call of love is in the spring, whispering to you and me! Mean! That I am a man and you are a woman, whose souls stand bared to each other! That I love you and you love me!"

And again she was crushed to his

"I don't love you Colling! Let me

ed her to him. "It is my hour! It's your fault as well as mine! Kiss me Peggy. You've tormented me long enough.

face up to his, and his lips crushed hers in a long fierce kiss. The telephone bell jangled loudly.

"Ellerdine!" she gasped.
"I as him ging!" And he kissed her.

again, in spite of her terrified struggles, "No, no!" she panted. "Answer him! Please—please!"

"Yes, Collingwood. It's he speak-

"Oh, yes," he went on in a natural tone. "We have just finished supper. What! I can't hear distinctly. You want to speak to—Oh, to Ellerdine! He put down the receiver and turned

Peggy shuddered and buried her face

"Yes, I like men who do things,"

Peggy's eyes were wide with terror. "Colling! What do you mean?" she

She broke out of his embrace, and

ried to the phone.
"Well, well, who is it," he demanded testily. "Wha-a-t!" He hastily pressed

was really frightened.
"My husband!" gasped Peggy, start-

ing."
Peggy's lips were stiff with terror.
"Where is he?" she managed to whisper, but Collingwood motioned to her to

to Peggy. He was very pale, but his eyes were shining.

"He wants to speak to you, too," he said in a low voice. "Perhaps you'd bet-

in her hands.
"I can't! I can't!" she moaned. He

ne pas fini-It's no use-we're cut off."

And he slammed the instrument onto

"Collingwood started and bit his lip.
"Collingwood started and bit his lip.
"I never thought of that!" he exclaimed. "Can he have had us—?" He left he sentence unfinished as a terrible sussicion flashed across his mind.
"What! What?" solbed Pages him.



He crushed her violently to him despite her struggles.

Peggy! No, no! Don't ring!" he pleaded, as her hand at last found the button. "Peggy, trust me! I love you better than anything else in the world! For you I will sacrifice wealth, honor!"

"I'll do anything to win you!" he went on desperately. "Everything I've done has been to win you—to have you for my own! You know it's true. "they were in a "rotten mess" and that took pains to tell Lady Attwill his feelings on both subjects at every possible moment, while she begged him in vain Before God, I believed you loved me, too, Peggy! Don't judge me too harshly, dear! Don't!

He attempted to take her in his arms again, but she pushed him off.
"I must be alone," she said, faintly.
He stepped back with a sigh.
"All right, Peggy." At the door he paused a moment. "Don't be afraid,

paused a moment. "Don't be afraid, dear," he said, tenderly. "It will all come right. Good night, Peggy."

The door had scarcely closed behind him before Pauline stumbled, white-

faced, into the room.

"Oh, madame!" she cried. "There is something altogether wrong! Just now when I came along I saw a man standing at your door listening! Twice before I have seen him to-day. He was

Peggy's overwrought nerves gave way in a storm of weeping and she threw herself upon Pauline's motherly

is going to happen!"
"Stay with me! Don back to your room! Stay with me-stay with me! Pet me as you used to hen I was little and afraid of the

Three travelers with strangely assorted purposes were hurrying through the night to be at Peggy's side in the

In a corner of a compartment on the dine, vexed of thought and sore of panion's thoughts must have been pleasant, for she sat up beside him and occasionally smiled enigmatically into

the darkness. The last express from London was bringing the third. He, too, sat up wide awake, and stared right ahead of him over the Paris road with burning eyes. Buttoned against his breast was a short, unsigned letter, every word of which was seared into his memory. And his heart was a fire of hell that he had lit from the debris of the wreck of his love and trust in a woman Lord Ellerdine alighted from the Chalons train in even a worse frame

Chalons train in even a worse frame of mind than had accompanied him aboard. His mind was small, but contrary to the rule of physics it moved slowly. He could never cling to but one idea at a time, but he clung to that tenaciously—unless it demanded anything of his memory. He was goodnatured, fatnous and about forty. For a time he threatened to shine in the diplomatic corps because he was so remarkable an ass that his opponents gave him credit for the deepest guile. But his inability to handle more than one idea at a time ruined bim, and his masters were unkind enough to forget that but for men of Dicky's type the might, majesty, dominion and power of the British Empire might never have been. He would have been a hero in the old Contacted were. This to possible the state of the state of

for he would never have been able to grasp the idea that he was beaten, On this particular morning Dicky El-you take my word for it." He's no foollerdine rose to an abnormal mental "Seems to me I have to take your level. He had two fixed ideas-that word for everything," he complained.

to desist.

"Stop it?" Of course, I will!" he ment in the hotel to remove the stains of travel, and Ellerdine was driven to a long, gloomy soliloquy over his shav-ing tackle. They met a half-hour later They met a half-hour later the parlor of Peggy's apartment and Dicky took up his forecast of disaster

were alone.
"Cheer up, Dicky," she begged. "You've been in many a worse fix than She was a woman of about thirty-five

was dressing her mistress and they

nd still retained much of what had been a cold beauty. Her mouth was its hard expression, and the eyes told that her life had not all been love and good will. She was handsomely

"Worse!" echoed Ellerdine. He was roaming gloomily about the apartment.
"I should say so! I don't mind getting into the fix, as you call it."
"Then what are you grumbling about?" she inquired from the depths

of an easy chair.

"How am I to get out of it! Any fool can get into a fix any time. Its getting out—what? That's a conundrum Alice."

Lady Attwill laughed softly. "Did I ever fail you?"

"No, no! You've been pretty good."

he conceded, but with a doubtful shake went up perfectly straight from neck as if the back of it had planed off. It was covered with short bushy brown hair and his upper lip was concealed by a foolish little blond mus-

tache. He talked with a lisp and dress-ed faultlessly. There you have a per-fect portrait of Richard Lord Ellerdine some time undersecretary in Downing Lady Attwill continued her efforts to reassure him.
"Haven't I got you out of many scrape?" she went on.

only two," he corrected himself, de-fensively. "And—yes"—he laughed to himself—"that was awkward!—But this

himself—"that was awkward!—But this is different," he persisted. "I'm not in one, exactly. It's Peggy's fix—and we don't quite know how she's got into it. I don't like the look of it."

He sank deep into a chair by the fire, leaned back, pulled his mustache and frowned at the ceiling. Lady Attwill glanced at the door of Peggy's bedroom.

"Look, of it! Pooh!" she exclaimed, with light acorn. "It is merely a frolic—nothing serious. Collingwood is not the man to run risks. He believes in the simple life." And she smiled a lit-

complication with Admaston," rejoin

"Well, you will leave all the thinking to me," she smiled. "You don't give me time to

know I'm deuced slow at it. But tell me he turned his head "How did Peggy and neet her glance. Collingwood get to my place fell me that-what?

He settled back as if conscious that te had delivered a facer. Motored through the night," replie the lady, promptly and coolly.

"They didn't—um!—they didn't!" exclaimed Dicky in mildly triumphant

"Well, it's all right to Collingwood, soothingly full length on the sofa.

"I know he did but they didn't!"
She gazed hard at him. "Dicky, you know something," she declared. He had resumed his sour scrutiny of the

"I know I do."
"What is it?" she demanded.
"Bad breakdown overnight at Selby,"
"Bad breakdown overnigh at Selby," to my place the next morning in a

he man who drove them down from "Dicky!" "It's a fact. Fellow is my chauffeur. So you see I can find out things if I have time enough, Alice!" He squirmed uncomfortable. "I don't like

this fix Peggy's in. Staying all night at Selby with Collingwood was bad enough, but"— "Good gracious!" snapped Lady Attwill so sharply that Dicky almost start-ed. "Can't a woman stay at the same hotel with a man she knows without scandal?"

"Scandal!" echoed Dicky, sitting up in a manner which was, for him, sud-den. "Damn the scandal! It's what folks think—it's who you are! Lots of women wouldn't mind staying at the hotel I was staying at, and nobody would dream there was anything wrong—you wouldn't, Alice. But Peggy and Collingwood make people suspect

"Madame will see Lady Attwill," in

terrupted Pauline's respectful voice from the doorway of the bedroom. "Tell Peggy I'm waiting." requested his lordship, as Lady Attwill hastened toward the door.

"Yes. American time bedroom." "Yes. Amuse yourself for a few min-es," she smiled with a nod toward "Amuse! What!" said Dicky with a lank stare. Then his face lit up with smile of comprehension. "Oh, yes! forning, Pauline. How is madame?"
"Oh, a headache—just a little ner-

"Ofi, a headache—just a little nervous. Is your lordship well," injuired
the maid, respectfully.

He shook his head and made a wry
face. "Had no sleep. Feel very groggy,
Pauline. Up all night in a confounded
slow train. Oh, there you are!" he
added in an altered tone as Collingwood, clean shaven and neat in a brown
are trained to the state of the sta

Hello, Ellerdine!" returned the "
see, cheerfully. "Bright and early, bro

ly, "but not so deuced bright, only chap."

Collingwood sat on the arm of the sofa and lit a cigarette. "When did you get here?" he inquired pleasantly, ignoring Ellerdine's manner, which was rapidly becoming forbidding.

"About 5 o'clock?"

"Had breakfast?"

"No; had a bath, a shave, and a change."

mented Collingwood.

the other.
"Oh, come on!" exclaimed Dicky, between annoyance and disgust. "Chuck
that business, Colling. I know your
beastly way of putting a fellow off—

beastly way of putting a fellow off— but you can't leave me out of this."
"Leave you out?" frowned Colling-wood, as if still puzzled.
"Wish to heaven you could."
"Look here!" exclaimed Collingwood, gently. "What's un?"
Dicky sat up and favored the ques-tion with his best stare of disappro-bation. "Well, are we at St. Moritz?" he

"No," admitted Collingwood.
"Are we in Switzerland?"

"Well, where are we?" "In Paris."
"There you are—there you are! And you've kot the sublime cheek to ask me what's up!" And Dicky hurled himself back among the cushions and resumed his gloomy contemplation of the mural effects, torturing his mustache the

Collingwood indulged in a good-natured laugh. "Now, don't get angry, Dicky," he said, soothingly. "It's all right—only a trifling contretemps. We got on the wrong train—by mistake."

Dicky violently jerked his eyes away from the charms of garlanded cupid

and stared again. "Are you telling me that for a fact or a joke?" he demanded.
"Fact—absolute fact!" Collingwood assured him calmly. "We were kept until the last moment paying duty on Peggy's cigarettes and had to rush for

"I saw you," interjected his lordship with meaning.
"Got in the one that was on the

res—the Paris express." Ellerdine nodded. "You jumped Peggy on and sprang after her, dragging the maid with you. Very clever bit of work, my friend," he told the Cupid. "Well, where were you?" "In the other train, the street of the control of the "In the other train-the right one-with Alice," answered Dicky, with point

ed emphasis. "It was a rotten thing for you to do." Collingwood smiled unnoticed. "Leave ou with Alice?" he inquired. His lord-

ship did not smile.

"No, to leave us in the lurch like his face and stopped his half-humorous groaning. "Not much!" he pleaded, "But," protested Collingwood, "I tele-

graphed to you to Chalons that we had wrong train."

had persuaded me that the train was heels at Chalons! We come here after 'Well, it's all right now," concluded ollingwood, soothingly, as he sank at much to think about

full length on the sofa. "So don't let's an attack of brain fever after this say any more about it."
"All right now, is it?" retorted Dicky.

And he slumped into an armchair. with cold irony. "Suppose Admaston hears about it-what?"

Collingwood settled himself among the cushions. "Oh, it'll be easy to invent some yarn that will satisfy him," he replied easily.

ing us!--"
"Now, look here, Dicky," interrupted the other in reproachful tones. 'I didn't think you'd cut up rough about it. I thought possibly Alice might, but not

"Oh, she doesn't mind." returned Ellerdine, sarcastically. "She doesn't be-lieve folks get on the wrong train or have motor boat accidents so they can

eyebrows came together.
"Do you mean you think Ibegan slowly.
"No I don't," interrupted Dicky un-

Collingwood sat up and his straight

at rest, Dicky," he said. "We must all have a coherent con nected varn to tell," said Collingwood easily.

His lordship snorted. "You'll never get four people to tell the same yarn without variations," he declared promptly. "Sure to be one let it down

Then we must set your conscience

"Oh I don't mean a long compl story." Collingwood assured him. a plain unvarnished tale." Thus defied Collingwood sat up and leaned toward his unbending friend in

just where it ought to be kept up.

eaned toward his unuenated a confidential way.

"Here you are then," he began cheerfully. "We all got on the wrong train." to "But we didn't," interrupted Dicky.

"Hang it," snapped the other, "I know we didn't but we'll say we did."

Dicky stared at him. "Am I to say be a say incredulously. Dicky stared at him. "An re did." he demanded incred "We'll all say we did." Co valued nationally.

"but not so deuced bright, only tily, "It isn't the truth that bothers me. It's getting the fib to sound all right."

Collingwood sat on the arm of the and went as you would instruct a child

in its first letters.

"We all got on the wrong train.

There's nething difficult in saying that."

"We all got on the wrong train," rea plied Dicky with as much inflection and enthusiasm as a schoolboy's first reading "Omnis Gallia in tres partes divisa

mented Collingwood.

"Staying here?"

"No, they wouldn't let us in. It's race day—or week—they're packed so we had to go to the St. Denis. A nice fix you got us all into," Ellerdine added coldly.

"Fix. I've got you into. How so?"
And he walked over to Dicky's chair and looked down at him. His lordship deigned not to glance at him.

"I'm blowed if I know—quite," he said in the same uncompromising tone.
"Anyway, we're in it."

"But I don't understand," protested the other.

"Staying here?"

"Bravo, Dicky!" cried Collingwood enthusiastically. "Now the next is we all stayed the night at this hotel."

Dicky stared his amazement. "What here!" he gasped.

"Yes here—at this hotel!"

"Oh, come on old chap, doesn't that sound like a bally lie? Now think it over. Listen! We all stayed the night at this hotel," and the tone was the same as before. He cocked his eye at Collingwood.

"All right," declared that gentleman. heartily, "What's wrong with it?"

Dicky stared his amazement. "What here!" he gasped.

"Yes here—at this hote!"

Collingwood.

"Yes here—at this hote!"

"Oh, come on old chap, doesn't that sound like a bally lie? Now think it over. Listen! We all stayed the night at this hotel," and the tone was the same as before. He cocked his eye at Collingwood.

"All right," declared that gentleman. heartily, "What's wrong with it?"

Dicky stared his amazement. "What here!" he gasped.

"Yes here—at this hote!"

"Oh, come on old chap, doesn't that sound like a bally lie? Now think it over. Listen! We all stayed the night at this hote!"

Dicky stared his hote!"

"Dicky stared his amazement. "What here!" he gasped.

"Yes here—at this hote!"

"Oh, come on old chap, doesn't that sound like a bally lie? Now think it over. Listen!" we all stayed the night at this hote!"

Dicky stared his his amazement. "What here!" here!" he gasped.

"Yes here—at this hote!"

Dicky stared his his amazement. "What here!" here!

same as before. He cocked his eye at Collingwood.

"All right," declared that gentleman. heartily, "What's wrong with it?"

Dicky shook his head again. "No it lacks something," he insisted.

"Rot! It's only because we didn't stay here. If you can say we all got on the wrong train surely to goodness you can say we stayed all night at this hotel.

"Yes," his lordship added with a

"We-all-got—on the wrong train," said Dicky slowly, as he wrote the sentence out in full. "Does seem easy, doesn't it?" He cocked his head on one side and grand indicially at the nad side and gazed judicially at the pad. "That looks all right," he announced

"Yes," his lordship added with a

"Tip top!" exclaimed the instructor.

"Now let's see, we all stayed the night at this hotel. No," he shook his head and looked up at Collingwood in dis-approval. "There's something wrong approval. with that." "It's only your sense of the scrupu-lous," urged the latter. "You

lous," urged the latter. "You say it often enough and it will sound all right. Good morning, Alice," he added as Lady Atwill slipped in from Peggy's chamber.

"Well, how is Peggy?"

"Bad head. She's coming in a minute or two," replied the lady. She seemed to be breathing rather quickly.

"I've had a warm quarter of an hour, though what I've done?——"
"Is she cut up?" demanded Dicky, anxiously.
"Cut up!" Lady Attwill lifted her arms and turned her eyes toward the arms and turned her eyes toward the ceiling. Dicky turned and began a nervous pacing of the room to the great annoyance of his mustache. "Awful! Simply awful!" he groaned, until Lady Attwill remarked helplessly, "I don't know what's to be done."

Then he brightened considerably and

Then he brightened considerably and faced her with a fatherly smile. "Oh, it's all settled," he assur

off in despair. "My head won't work.
You tell her, old man. I've forgotten
the bally thing already."
Lady Attwill turned to Collingwood

with an amused smile. "You've surely never given Dicky anything to think about?"

penitently.
This was too much. All of Dicky's wrongs of the past twelve hours re

turned on him in a wave.
"Not much!" he repeated indignant-"Yes, I know you did," said his lord-ship grimly, "but that didn't make it true. I wouldn't have gone on if Alice and leaves us kicking our confounded running in two sections and that you them and find the hotel full of bookies! should be sure to join us at Chalons." Sit up all night in a beastly slow train. Sit up all night in a beastly slow train. No sleep, no food, no Switzerland! Not

> Lady Attwill bent over the back of the chair and pressed his shoulder. "Now tell me, Colling," she

and to the point and easy to tell, he "You'll have to do it. I never could invent," said Dicky, hopelessly. "Never I should have gone in for writing if I'd been able to invent a bit. No good lordship. "Who's going to tell Admasatit! - Confound you, Colling, land-ton the truth?"

Lady Attwill glanced at him with Lady Attwill glanced at him with faint amusement. "How's he to know?"

"Just a short, straight tale

she inquired.
"Know! I've bet Collingwood a fiver all London knows to-night. "Bosh!" exclaimed Collingwood. 'Anway, we can all say we all took the "We all took the wrong train," came the solemn monotone from the depths

"But we didn't," objected the lady. Dicky sat up. "There you are!" he cried in fatuous "Oh, I see!" she said slowly, with a culiar smile. "That is the short simpeculiar smile. le tale. I see! We all got on the

of the chair.

vrong train.

"There, Dicky," exclaimed Colling-ood. "See how quickly Alice picks "Oh, she's used to it!" Dicky in no very courtly fashion, as he rose and reached for the cigarette case which Lady Attwill still held in her fingers. "She picks up things very quickly—now tell her the sequel," he

ame yarn duickly—now tell her the sequer, madeclared challenged Collingwood as he settled himself in his chair once more. "That's the water jump for me!"

"Come on," said the lady, "let's have a look at it." a look at it."
"We all stayed the night at this hotel," said Collingwood, smoothly.
"Try that" cried his lordship, in anti-

cipatory triumph.
"We all stayed the night at this hotel," said the lady, calmly.
"There you are!" exclaimed Colling-

"There you are exclaimed wood.
"Very simple," said the lady.
Dicky sighed. "Comes very easy to you, Alice," he remarked. "You might have been at it all your life."
"Ah, woman's wit!"
"Yes, that's what I mean," Dicky agreed hastily, as a waiter glided in with a large tray concealed under covered dishes and gleaming silver, "Frond!" he almost shouted, springing up. "I'm starving!"